

## Message Text

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SUBJECT: SECRETARY CALIFANO VISIT TO ITALY: MEETING AT THE NATIONAL  
RESEARCH COUNCIL (CNR)

REF: A) ROME 7764, B) ROME A-27, 2-17-78

1. PRESENT AT THE MEETING WOULD BE THE PRESIDENT OF CNR (QUAGLIARIELLO) AND THE 14 MEMBERS OF ITS HIGH COUNCIL. CNR IS THE MAJOR SOURCE OF PURE RESEARCH FUNDS IN ITALY, INCLUDING FUNDS FOR BIOMEDICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. MUCH OF THIS RESEARCH IS DONE IN CNR'S OWN INSTITUTES. IN ADDITION TO ITS ROLE IN PURE RESEARCH, CNR HAS RECENTLY MOUNTED SEVERAL QTE TARGETTED RESEARCH PROJECTS UNQTE, INCLUDING ONE FOR BIOMEDICINE AND ONE FOR ENVIRONMENT.

2. IN ITALY, EXCESSIVE INTERFERENCE BY THE GOVERNMENTAL-POLITICAL PROCESS (AND BY LESS SPECIFIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS) IS THE GREAT DANGER FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. PARTY MEMBERSHIP IN SOME AREAS IS ALREADY A MAJOR FACTOR IN ACADEMIC HIRING AND IN RESEARCH GRANTS, THEREFORE IT IS USEFUL TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE AMERICAN EFFORT TO PROTECT OUR RESEARCH SYSTEMS AGAINST THIS SORT OF INTERFERENCE. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE ITALIANS HEAR A RINGING ENDORSEMENT OF THE

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MERIT PRINCIPLE AND ITS NECESSARY ROLE IN SCIENCE. IN THIS CONNECTION, THEY NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE U.S. CONSULTATIVE PROCESSES BY WHICH THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY IS INVOLVED IN THE DECISION-MAKING, THROUGH ADVISORY COMMITTEES, HENCE INVOLVED IN BUT INSULATED FROM THE POLITICAL PROCESS.

3. THE SECRETARY'S PRESENTATION WOULD FOCUS PRIMARILY ON THE

HEW SYSTEMS FOR ALLOCATING FEDERAL RESEARCH MONEY. THE BODY OF THE PRESENTATION SHOULD BE A FACTUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE KIND OF RESEARCH BUDGET WHICH HEW CONTROLS AND THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES WHICH GUIDE THE DISTRIBUTION OF THESE FUNDS. THE TITLE OF THE PRESENTATION MIGHT BE ONE U.S. RESEARCH POLICY AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS UNQUOTE, REFLECTING THE ROLE OF THE SECRETARY IN THIS PROCESS AND HIS RESPONSIVENESS TO THE VARIOUS FACTORS AT PLAY ON THE AMERICAN SCENE.

RM. IN LEADING UP TO THIS DESCRIPTIVE SECTION, IT WOULD BE WISE TO DWELL ON THE PRINCIPLES WHICH HAVE GOVERNED THE GROWTH OF THE U.S. RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENT AS THE MOST IMPORTANT IN THE WORLD, ON WHICH (THOUGH UNDER REAL CHALLENGE TODAY) IS LIABLE TO MAINTAIN LEADERSHIP IN MOST FIELDS FOR YEARS TO COME. CONSIDERING THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT TOOK PLACE OVERNIGHT (ONLY IN THE LAST 50 YEARS), IT IS WORTH REFLECTING ON THE CONDITIONS WHICH PRODUCED IT AND THE METHODS WHICH GUARANTEED ITS EFFECTIVENESS.

5. IN THIS HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION, THE FIRST POINT WOULD BE TO STRESS THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITIES AS THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF BASIC RESEARCH IN THE U.S. SYSTEM, CONTRASTING WITH THE EUROPEAN SYSTEM OF UNIVERSITY-RELATED BUT ISOLATED RESEARCH INSTITUTES. IN THE U.S. SYSTEM, GROWING OUT OF THE LAND-GRANT COLLEGES, THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITIES WAS DEFINED IN THREE ORGANIZABLY INTERCONNECTED FUNCTIONS: TEACHING (TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE), RESEARCH (ACQUISITION OF NEW KNOWLEDGE), AND SERVICE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE TO SOCIETAL NEEDS). WHILE THIS SYSTEM IS UNIQUE AND INDEED CHANGING TODAY, THESE THREE INTERRELATED PURPOSES MARK THE U.S. SYSTEM AS DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS.

6. THE SECOND POINT TO MAKE MIGHT BE THE USE OF TAX INCENTIVES AT THE FEDERAL CENTER TO ENCOURAGE RESEARCH WITHOUT THE CENTER ASKING TO CONTROL THINGS. TAX DEDUCTION FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF INVESTMENTS IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT HAVE MARKED THE AMERICAN SYSTEM AND AGAIN REVEAL THE U.S. CONVICTION THAT THE LESS GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO INTERFERE THE BETTER FOR US ALL, AND A CORRESPONDING FAITH THAT RESEARCH IN AND OF ITSELF IS A GOOD THING.

7. A THIRD POINT MIGHT BE THE RISE OF HIGH-COST RESEARCH AND THE CONSEQUENT NEED FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO PLAY A DIFFERENT ROLE, NOW AS PROVIDER, IN CERTAIN AREAS. THIS WOULD THEN LEAD INTO A CONSIDERATION OF HOW HEW CONTROL OVER RESEARCH MAY BE INCREASING AND THE PROBLEMS THIS RAISES. THE CONTROVERSY OVER RECOMBINANT DNA RESEARCH IS PERHAPS THE MAJOR LEADING EXAMPLE OF OUR OWN UNRESOLVED DIFFICULTIES. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR THE SECRETARY TO OFFER HIS VIEW OF THIS ISSUE AND HOW HE SEES THE GREATER FEDERAL ROLE IN CONTROLLING RESEARCH RECONCILED WITH

MERITOCRATIC PRINCIPLES AND FREEDOM OF SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY.

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